

FREDERICK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting for
October 20, 2021
Virtual & In-Person Meeting

See video for further meeting details: <http://frederickcountymd.gov/5956/Video-Archives>

Members Present: Sam Tressler, Chair; Craig Hicks, Vice-Chair; Joel Rensberger, Secretary; Carole Sepe; Michael Sowell.

Members Absent: Terry Bowie.

Staff Present: Kimberly Golden Brandt, Livable Frederick Director; Kathy Mitchell, Senior Assistant County Attorney; Denis Superczynski, Livable Frederick Planning Manager; Tim Goodfellow, Livable Frederick Environmental Planner and Karen James, Administrative Specialist

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** Sam Tressler
2. **ROLL CALL** Sam Tressler
3. **DRAFT SUGARLOAF TREASURED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Ms. Brandt gave a brief review of what was covered at the previous Draft Sugarloaf Treasured Landscape Management Plan workshop, held Oct. 13. Staff are currently working on revisions to Chapters 1-3. Chapter 4 – Land Use is the next workshop topic.

Commission members were asked to vote when making a decision or directing staff to make changes so the direction to staff is clear and recorded in the minutes.

Existing and proposed zoning and land use maps were provided in the meeting packet, along with letters and e-mails from members of the advisory group, area residents and business owners, Council Member Hagen, and others.

Ms. Sepe said that she feels the Planning Commission should send a letter to the Council asking them to hold their comments until the Planning Commission's work is done. Mr. Rensberger was in agreement with Ms. Sepe. Mr. Sowell said he understands that an elected official should acknowledge constituent emails; however, including specific comments on plan content is what is being questioned. Mr. Hicks said he would be troubled by the idea of appearing to constrain what our elected officials can and cannot do.

Mr. Tressler suggested staff write a letter on behalf of the Planning Commission. Ms. Sepe said she felt it should come from the Planning Commission and not put staff in that position. Mr. Rensberger agreed and suggested Mr. Hicks compose a short letter.

Ms. Brandt offered advice on the process, explaining that Mr. Hicks could compose a letter and provide it to the Planning Commission members for discussion at the next meeting. Ms. Mitchell offered to supply information explaining the process and the Planning Commission's role. Mr. Hicks agreed to draft a letter and have it ready by the next meeting.

Mr. Goodfellow began his presentation with maps showing proposed Land Use and Zoning changes in the Draft Plan.

Ms. Sepe commented that Sugarloaf is part of Livable Frederick, and that every chapter should clearly make that connection.

Ms. Sepe asked about different zoning classifications on a parcel, and were owners notified of the proposed changes in the draft plan. Ms. Brandt explained that for rezonings the County is required to notify property owners and adjoiners in advance of the Planning Commission public hearing and the County Council public hearing.

There was a discussion of the best place to insert maps in the printed draft plan.

Ms. Sepe felt there should be improvements made to referencing the appendix.

Further discussion included Ms. Brandt explaining the staff has tried to create a path forward for Stronghold, the owner of Sugarloaf Mountain. In discussions with staff, Stronghold has expressed interest in possibly having a visitor center, gift shop, and concession stands on site.

A break was taken at 11:01 a.m. The meeting resumed at 11:11 a.m.

Mr. Goodfellow shared each component of the proposed zoning overlay and Planning Commission members expressed their thoughts.

Concerns were expressed regarding the use of the word "unique." Following discussion it was determined that staff could offer something more specific.

Presentations continued with proposed design standards for non-residential buildings. Mr. Hicks said that many of the design standards serve a decorative purpose, and that there may be more angles to consider.

Continuing his presentation, Mr. Goodfellow recommended that staff remove a portion of "Additional Requirements in the Sugarloaf Rural Heritage Overlay Zoning District" (A-21) for several reasons including that the County cannot mandate action by a State agency.

Permanent and portable saw mills were discussed and the difference explained. Stronghold does regular timber harvesting on their property. They have a forest management plan and generate income that way, like most property owners do. Additional forest management was discussed.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m. for lunch. Meeting resumed at 1:15 p.m. Following technical difficulties, public comment was received beginning at 1:47 p.m.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

Instructions were given for callers from the public. There was one recording and five live calls.

5. DRAFT SUGARLOAF TREASURED LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Ms. Brandt said that at the conclusion of last month's workshop there was an opportunity for staff to clear up some misinformation. Based on comments at this workshop, Ms.

Brandt clarified that staff is not proposing that Stronghold should not be able to do timber harvesting on their land.

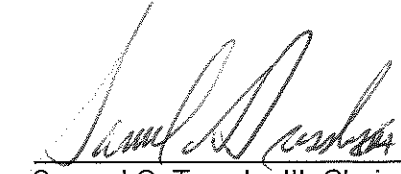
Mr. Goodfellow shared one last slide addressing solar facilities. Ms. Sepe expressed concern that some content in the appendix is easily missed and could be placed in a different section of the plan.

Mr. Goodfellow stated that a big component of the plan is the protective overlay zone and why it is needed, what it does, and how it functions.

Mr. Hicks pointed out that they had just heard from a representative of Stronghold and they are not interested in the overlay.

Discussion continued between staff and Planning Commission members. Ms. Brandt asked if there is anything staff can provide to the members to assist them in their deliberations. Mr. Hicks suggested a spreadsheet showing the uses permitted in the existing zoning districts, uses permitted in the proposed overlay, and uses permitted in the "STR" zoning district proposed for the Stronghold property by their attorney.

Mr. Tressler declared the meeting adjourned at 3:11 p.m.


Samuel G. Tressler III, Chair

11/17/21
Date